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IMPENDING ANARCHY



S. S. HEBBERD

AUTHOR OF "THE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY," ETC.



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BY

S. S. HEBBERD

Author of "The Philosophy of History"

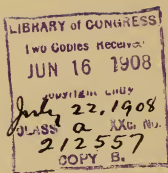
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TO
HON. WILLIAM J. BRYAN
THE GREAT COMMONER OF THE WEST
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

PREFACE

It is very difficult, almost impossible, to gain a hearing for a philosophic work now unless it is written by some distinguished teacher in the universities. Works of thought seem to be judged as factory products are, by the label of the manufacturer. If the label is all right, any kind of nonsense—pragmatism, for example—will be received with reverence.

Another difficulty in my case is the American zeal for imitation in which we excel all nations except, perhaps, the Chinese. This trait is the main source of our inferiority in art and literature which so many just now are trying to explain. And it has made American philosophy farcical. Recall, for instance, Professor Royce's sneer—in his "Spirit of Modern Philosophy"—at any writer who dares to deviate from the past tenor of philosophy. Cervantes describes Sancho Panza as "so impressed by what his master had told him about enchanters, that he would not believe his own eyes." What a wonderful forecast of American philosophy, the Sancho Panza to a German Don Quixote!

A third difficulty may be illustrated by an incident. Some months ago copies of my *Philosophy of History* were sent to forty of the most prominent

PREFACE

clergymen of New York City. Of these, one read it and praised it very highly; two others acknowledged its receipt, the rest did not have the courtesy to do even that. Now I *know* that my demonstration of God's existence—given in Chapter II of this book—is new and that it carries upon its face convincing power enough to entitle it to some attention, especially in an age like this when the wiser theists do not pretend to have any support for their belief except the thin vapors and vagaries of “feeling.” But the thirty-seven would probably say that not being experts upon these deep questions, they leave them to the college professors. So those rebuked by Jesus for building upon the sand might say that they were not expert enough in geology to know the difference between sand and rock.

Urged by these and other difficulties I have compacted my philosophy in this little book. The book will be sent to every college in the land; and surely among all these teachers, graduate students, etc., there will be someone able and eager to point out the fatal flaw, if there is one.

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CHAPTER I

THE SECRET OF THOUGHT

I. *Schopenhauer and Hume*

THE aim of this little book is to briefly indicate the only possible barrier which reason offers against the religious, moral and political anarchy now threatening all Christendom, and especially the people of America. That, of course, outlines a gigantic task. So much so that I should never dream of entering upon it if there had not more than thirty years ago dawned upon me an undiscovered and yet very simple principle which seemed to me to instantly illumine the whole darkened sphere of modern thought. And it is an evident necessity that every such discovery must be of extreme simplicity. Otherwise it could never hope to triumph over the might of routine and mental inertia. Consider for instance the fortunes of the Copernican theory, simple enough for a child to understand and yet failing of general acceptance even among astronomers for almost a century. What would have been its fate if it had come couched in the ambiguous mystifying phrases of, say, Hegelism? Furthermore, philosophy in its

present sad estate as a mere jumble of paradox and dispute, is so much neglected by all save a few committed to some special system that unless a new principle was very simple and clear, it would not have the slightest chance of a hearing.

Let none of those, then, who have wandered long in that maze of subtleties and high-sounding phrases called Modern Philosophy turn away in scorn because my thesis is neither obscure nor intricate. The secrets of Nature always seem open and evident where once we have found them out. But it is not so easy to find them out; it is far easier for thought to wander about amid non-essentials and verbiage, to move around in aimless circles like a man lost in the woods.

The principle then, which I here seek to prove and establish as the basis of all mental science, is simply this: *All thinking is a relating of cause and effect.* In other words, there is no form of thought, no percept, concept, judgment or relation that does not enfold within it some causal relation, lacking which it would become unintelligible and meaningless. But before proceeding to our proof one or two preliminary considerations are necessary.

Schopenhauer. First, let no one confound this principle with Schopenhauer's doctrine that all the twelve categories which Kant had found in the human understanding were reducible to a single one, that of causality. For Schopenhauer, like Kant, regarded the understanding as but a part of the intellect, and a very inferior part, the fatal source of

all illusions. Its categories, therefore, whether twelve or one, lacked all true universality; they applied only to mere "phenomena"; and the upshot was an illusionism far more thorough than that of Kant, since it went boldly on to that pessimism which—as the history of India so painfully shows—is the inevitable outcome of every fully developed theory of Maya or illusion.

My doctrine is the exact opposite of all this, both in scope and purpose. Its scope is completely universal, maintaining that every possible form of thinking, as distinguished from mere feeling, involves a causal relation as its essence. And one of my chief purposes is—through the inductive proof of the universality of the causal element in all thinking—to establish an ultimate criterion of truth; and thus build a barrier against both the Kantian illusionism and the "pragmatism" now taking its place. In fine, Schopenhauer's view of causality instead of being imitated, is shattered by mine.

The Criterion of Truth. One chief curse of our vaunted modernism is that its destructive criticism has broken down the old criteria of truth, but has not been able to put anything else in their place. It has torn down, but knows not how to rebuild. Even through all the storm and stress of the eighteenth century the primary convictions of mankind were conserved by the doctrine of "intuitions," or "innate ideas," or "universal and necessary truths." But finally Kant came forward with a suggestion very simple, very true, and yet leading to the most

tragic results. He suggested that the doctrine of intuitions really discredited what it had been supposed to guarantee. If man was thus driven irresistibly to so many beliefs which he could not prove, might not these beliefs be mere delusions forced upon us all by some twist in our "mental make-up"? His successors, instead of allaying this suspicion, intensified it; and Hegel ended by repudiating even the law of contradiction. From that day to this paradox and non-sense have seemed to reign supreme in philosophy.

At least the old doctrine of intuitions, etc., has been riddled and hopelessly wrecked. And for a century our most elementary convictions, our most sacred truths, moral as well as religious, have been hanging in cloud-land, like castles in the air.

But even if Kant has wrecked the intuitional theory, there must be some more enduring support for the moral and religious life of mankind than vague feeling or the evanescent moods of sentimentalism. And my doctrine, I think, opens a way to the satisfying of this demand, this most vital and urgent need of the age. It provides far better than the exploded intuitions ever did for an unassailable and ultimate criterion of truth. For if I can prove that every act of thinking implies a causal relation, then plainly to cancel causality is to render all thinking impossible. The argument is in fact, a *reductio ad absurdum*, in the completest form imaginable. The geometer proves his theorem by showing that its denial would logically lead to the denial of some universally

accepted principle and would, therefore, be absurd. We prove our theorem by showing that its denial would involve the overthrow of all principles, the effacing of all distinctions between the true and the false, appearance and reality, existence and non-existence—in fine, would involve the utter extinction of thought.

Hume's Problem. In this way I expect to solve Hume's celebrated problem which, according to Höffding, "even Kant failed to solve and which indeed is insoluble." But that problem is instantly solved the moment I prove that the idea of causality is logically involved in all acts of perceiving, conceiving, judgment or inference. Hume claimed that causation was nothing but the uniform succession of phenomena in space and time. But I shall prove that each word in the substituted phrase—uniformity, succession, things or phenomena, space, time—has involved within it the idea of causality. The relations severally indicated by these words all rest primarily upon causal relations and when the latter are cancelled these words lose all their meaning. Thus in the very act of denying or doubting causality, Hume is really affirming it over and over again.

II. *Cause and Reason*

It will probably be objected to my argument that I confound different kinds of causality so diverse that nothing can be predicated of them in common. But my best

answer to this will be the entire course of my exposition wherein these distinctions will not only be carefully kept in mind, but will be more fully and clearly explained than ever before. Here I confine myself to that distinction which in recent philosophy seems to have almost entirely swallowed up or submerged the rest—the distinction between cause and reason or ground.

Bradley devotes an entire chapter of his *Logic* to emphasizing the immensity of this contrast between cause and reason. And yet the gist of his whole argument is given in a single one of three illustrations which he uses. "Two coins," he says, "are proven to have similar inscriptions because they each are like to a third; but the cause is not found in this interrelation. The cause is the origin from a common die." Could anything be sillier than that? Here are two different effects: on the one hand, two similar inscriptions; on the other, our *knowledge* of their similarity. Certainly the two results are not produced by the same cause—to-wit, the common die. But how does that prove any antithesis between a cause and a reason? In fact, it proves absolutely nothing but the mere truism that two such utterly dissimilar effects as a physical fact and our mental recognition of that fact cannot have the same cause.

The other two illustrations are of like character but even more fantastic. Indeed, the entire chapter is little more than an incessant repeating of the argument just given.

But a more familiar and also far less absurd argument for the alleged antithesis between cause and reason is as follows: Cause refers only to changes or events, but reason refers to truths which are not changes in time but are immutable and eternal. But even here, I think, there is the same confounding of a fact with our knowledge of the fact. The intricate chain of reasons which the geometer gives as proof, for example, of the ratio between the diameter and circumference of a circle are causes not of the fact but of our belief in the fact. And beliefs or other mental events are as much changes as any physical event. What indeed is more changeful and fugacious than the movement of thought?

Reason and cause then are in no wise discrepant: the former is simply one kind of the latter.

III. *Relations of Resemblance*

Man's mental life starts from the mere noting of resemblances. This purely automatic process of detecting similarities is one which the brutes can perform as well as man and often better; witness, for instance, a dog scenting the foot-prints of his prey.

But that this automatic noting of resemblances is not genuine thinking is evident at a glance. For the moment we try to express it in clear, exact propositions or judgments it shows itself as incurably vague, incoherent and even self-contradictory. We can affirm of anything that it is *like* anything else,

and in the same breath we can affirm with equal truth that it is *not like* that other thing.

How now can this vagueness, and self-contradiction be transformed into real thinking? Simply by reaching down to that upon which this incoherent, self-contradictory relation of resemblance *depends*. Thus two yellow objects are made alike by the process of color, by the conjoint action of aether-waves, nerve-currents, etc.; at the same time they are made unlike by other causes. In fine, the moment we reach the causal relation underlying the likeness or difference we begin to think.

All that seems plain and simple enough. And yet I stand ready to maintain that this simple thought of a transition from relations of resemblance to causal ones enfolds almost the whole sum and substance of a true Theory of Knowledge. The recognition of it would have saved modern philosophy from most of the errors, paradoxes and puerilities that have so sorely afflicted it. For example, the writer already quoted, Bradley, has sent forth another famous volume, the key-note of which is as follows: "A relational way of thinking—any one that moves by the machinery of terms and relations, must give appearance and not truth." But scrutinise his argument for this amazing proposition and you discover that like all Hegelizers, he is occupied solely with relations of likeness and difference. And confined within that sphere, his paradox is but a truism. All relations of resemblance are indeed delusive and self-contradictory unless we point out that upon

which the resemblance *depends*—in other words, unless they are transformed into causal relations.

Does some one say that instead of making the above sweeping assertion concerning this argument against relations I ought to go into details and prove my point? But I have neither space nor patience to repeat Bradley's long, wire-drawn dialectic and then criticise it line by line; it may be well, however, to fix attention upon his main point and error. Note then what appears upon the most cursory inspection that he is crusading solely against *relations between qualities*. He rejects the thing as aught beyond a mere group or sum of attributes; and also scouts at causality. Now surely no one will deny that qualities thus conceived, without things, disconnected "wandering adjectives," cannot possibly have any other relations to each other except likeness and difference. Undeniably then he is dealing solely with those vague inchoate relations of resemblance which, as I have shown, are always incoherent and self-contradictory. And thus he finds it easy enough to prove to an astonished world that all relational modes of thought "give appearance and not truth."

But this fallacy of resemblance seems omnipresent and almost omnipotent. The empiricists are still more in bondage to it than the Hegelians; they would reduce all thinking to the blind working of the psychical mechanism that associates similarities. Ordinary idealism or illusionism also has its main source in this fallacy of resemblance. It is taken for granted that perceptions are copies or pictures

of the things perceived, and so the perfectly hopeless question arises: "How do we know that these pictures secreted within, really resemble the world without? Berkeley's argument constantly hinges upon the impossibility of any such resemblance.¹ Schopenhauer boldly claims that we are "conscious of these pictures within the brain."² And Spencer even gives us diagrams showing the degree of correspondence between the images and the reality.³

But these paradoxes all vanish before my simple discovery—almost a truism—that a relation of resemblance by itself is necessarily crude, incoherent and self-contradictory, that it never becomes really intelligible until it is converted into a causal relation by showing that upon which the resemblance *depends*.

IV. *Substance and Attribute*

We have here another difficulty from which modern idealism or illusionism has germinated. Common-sense and scholasticism had found no way of comprehending the relation of substance and attribute except through the crude metaphor of inherence. Attributes inhered in the substance like pins stuck in a pin-cushion.

But real light began to dawn through Herbart's famous suggestion that "substantiality is causality."

¹ *Principles of Knowledge*, S. 8-15, especially.

² Schopenhauer, *The World as Will*, II. 400.

³ Spencer *Psychology*, II. 225.

But that principle needs to be modified by recalling the scientific doctrine of the complexity of all physical processes of causation. No thing is the entire cause of any of its attributes, a host of other agencies are also requisite. The thing, for example, is but a single factor in the intricate process of causation which produces the color of that thing. But it is also a factor in each and all the other processes whereby the other attributes of that thing are produced. Thus we find in the thing a *permanence* which is more or less lacking in its adjectives. Each of the latter disappears or changes when any factor essential to its production is withdrawn or modified. The color fades when the sun goes down; the size changes with a change of temperature. But the thing endures; this one factor in all the processes remains.

Herbart's discovery then, as we have explained it, is incontrovertible: substantiality is causality. That would be amply sufficient for our present purpose which is to prove that every relation of substance and attribute is a causal relation. In fact our entire thesis is demonstrated by this one insight. For all thinking as distinct from mere feeling, is reducible to affirmation, judgment or predication. And the relation of subject and predicate which constitutes a judgment, everywhere runs precisely parallel to the relation of substance and accident.

(1) But in addition behold the enigmas, in the philosophy of the past which this insight unravels. Take first the old dilemma long observed by logi-

cians, that if we abstract all the attributes all knowledge of the substance vanishes. That plainly is but a case of our fundamental law of knowledge that causes are knowable only through their effects, and conversely effects through their causes. But in dealing with this dilemma there was an oversight which has passed unnoticed and has led to most disastrous results. Let me describe this oversight by presenting its most famous example.

(2) The first principle of Hegelism, as everybody knows, is that pure or abstract Being= O . The oversight here is the one referred to above—the confounding of the *knowledge* of a cause with the *existence* thereof. It is quite true that we can know nothing of a thing apart from some of its known effects. But it is not true that a thing might not exist independently of these effects. And caring little for these out-worn paradoxes, I leave the matter thus.

(3) It is more important, however, to consider the now very common tendency to regard the substance as but a name for a special group of attributes. The strength of this tendency is laughably shown by the case of Hobhouse, who writes an immense volume in defense of natural realism and then throws it all to the winds by proclaiming that a thing is naught but the group of its attributes. And yet it does not seem hard to get rid of this paradox. We have only to remember that an effect cannot be known nor even exist apart from the cause whence it has been abstracted. Modern science has

taught us that the attributes of things are but so many different forms of motion. And it seems quite evident that a motion cannot exist apart from some moving thing.

(4) When it occurred to Berkeley that attributes instead of inhering in, might be effects of things, he answered that things being inert could not be causes. But inertia means only that a thing cannot act in isolation, but only in conjunction with other things. And that is precisely what is emphasized in my doctrine: The thing or substance is not the entire cause but only a factor in many causal processes.

(5) Another strange freak of bewildered metaphysics is Lotze's conception of a thing as an "individual or realized law."¹ Even Lotze concedes that this theory of his contains "something intrinsically unthinkable." But substitute for this impossible conception that of the thing as the persistent factor in each and all of the causal processes whereby its attributes are produced. Thus you retain whatever truth the idea of a law or formula sought to retain and your theory is not what Lotze conceded his to be, "the putting together of two words, on which the ordinary course of thinking has stamped two incompatible and contradictory meanings."

Other errors invite our consideration, but lack of space forbids. But enough has been said, I think, to

¹ Lotze, *Metaphysics*, I. 93. Also Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 39-43.

prove that the relation of substance and attribute becomes really intelligible—is freed from the obscurities and paradoxes heretofore investing it—only by conceiving it as a causal relation.

V. *Identity and Change*

Here we encounter another tangle of obscurities, and riddles which both the skeptic and the illusionist have freely used to advance their respective theories. The difficulties, however, investing this relation of identity and change are too well known to need recital here: it is only necessary to attempt their solution.

And the key to this solution is to be found, I think, in what has already been said concerning the crudeness and self-contradictoriness of all relations of resemblance. For the relation of identity and change evidently belongs in this category: it is but a modified form of the relation of likeness and difference. The only contrast between them is that in the latter the likeness or difference is that between different things or objects; but identity and change refer to the likeness and unlikeness of the same body *to itself* at successive periods of time. Therefore it follows, as a matter of course, that this relation of identity and change, like all others of the same class, should be elusive, incoherent and self-contradictory. And that it has been so is painfully proved by the whole history of thought. Over this

riddle of identity and change, Greek philosophy at an early day split into two parties, the followers of Parmenides and those of Herakleitos. And the discussion has continued ever since with unabated vigor but with slight increase of knowledge or any other valuable result.

Light, however, begins to dawn when we conceive this relation of identity and change as a causal relation. Anything whatsoever may be considered as the embodiment of a particular process of causation all its own; this constitutes its permanent character or identity. And the changes through which it passes are in large degree the *results* of this special or individual process. Thus a tree embodies a particular process of growth from the germ on through successive stages until the tree is destroyed. Still more is this the case with a human body which may cast off every one of its constituent atoms over and over again and suffer a host of other changes, but still retain its identity as a single, permanent embodiment of an invariable process of organic life.

Nevertheless this concept of identity will necessarily remain always more or less obscure on account of its close kinship with that of resemblance—the chief source of all fallacy and confused thought. But whatever of clearness and intelligibility is possible must always come through stress upon the causal relation underlying it. And so we turn to another relation far more important, equally chaotic and perplexing at present, but more capable of being cleared of vagueness and ambiguity.

VI. *The One and the Many*

There is truth in Professor James' dictum that the relation of "the One and the Many forms the most central of all philosophic problems, central because so pregnant."¹ But so far its pregnancies seem to have given birth to nothing but an amazing brood of disputes and futilities. All agree that the human mind yearns after some sort of unity. But there are so many different and conflicting kinds of this unity that the quest after it has ever ended in a desert wider and more barren than Sahara. But from our present vantage-ground, it seems to me that true answers can be found to the three fundamental questions involved in this troublous theme. First, what kind of unity does the mind seek? Second, why does it seek it? Third, and most important of all, how can this unity be reconciled with the manifest plurality of things?

(1) My answer to the first question is, that the only self-consistent and really intelligible kind of unity is causal unity. Both the two so-called Monisms which divide the empire of modern speculation between them, have their origin and find their chief defense in the plea that the mind longs for unity. But what a pitiful and preposterous unity it is which either of these two systems has to offer! Consider naturalistic monism which seeks to satisfy this rational demand for unity by picturing a universe

¹ James, *Pragmatism*, 129.

consisting solely of an infinite host and whirl of invisible atoms? Is not that plurality incarnate, a false abstraction, a phantom with the label of "Unity" pinned upon its back? On the other hand, idealistic monism seeks the same end by blotting out the universe as an idle dream, leaving not a wrack behind, but an empty "Absolute" which has nothing to do except to "reject inconsistencies."¹ Where, on this globe, is there a healthy mind that is really longing after any such unity as that?

Less absurd than these are "the unities of discourse—the universal, the natural kind, etc.—which have played so great a part in modern theorizing. But, as I shall show a few pages farther on, natural systems of classification have been established and universals can be made really self-consistent and comprehensible only by turning from mere resemblances to find the true import of every universal or class in the causal process whereby the members of that class have been produced. In fine, it is only causal unity which gives intelligibility and satisfies the longing of the human mind.

Even Art, although resting more upon an appeal to the emotions than upon definite formulas of thought, furnishes full proof that the real craving of the intellect is for causal unity. But for the evidence of this I must refer the reader to my *Philosophy of History*.² There it is shown that all aesthetic values in their three grand divisions—

¹ Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 139.

² *Philosophy of History*, 66-78; 135-142; 198 and 270 seq.

beauty of form, of color and of sound—come not from mere imitation but from the dim revelation of some latent cause, principle or power upon which the infinite variety of nature depends. It is there shown, too, that in this respect the history of art confirms its theory. The noblest and most productive of all aesthetic emotions—the love of nature—springs up only among peoples, like those of India or of Mediaeval Europe, who were inspired and thrilled by the thought of an Infinite Cause pervading all things. And in our own times we see the love of nature perishing, and with it all artistic excellence, because faith in God as an effective power in the world has virtually vanished. To quote the magnificent saying of Ruskin: “The modern love of nature is a sort of vanity. It is self and its moods, not God that we see mirrored in nature.”

A similar proof might be drawn from the history of the origin of science. But enough has been said, perhaps, to prove what is so nearly self-evident; to wit, that the only unity which really satisfies the mind is causal unity.

(2) We come now to the second question: Why does the human mind crave this causal unity? And the evident answer is, because the very nature of thinking consists in a relating of cause and effect. Reason may be deluded for a while by false analogies, metaphors, dialectics of “identity and difference,” or “the whole and its articulated parts,” or some other crude fallacy of resemblance. But these are only inbecilities of thought which inevitably end

in confusedness and self-contradiction. Therefore the mind seeks after causal unity. It can never rest or find any lasting delight in the Many until it grasps the One, upon which they all *depend*. That is the *Monism of the future*.

(3) And so we come to the third question: How shall we conceive of perfect unity without effacing the evident plurality of things? That is the most difficult of all cosmological questions, the rock upon which all previous monisms have gone to pieces. To save the One, they have had to sacrifice the Many: things became mere phantoms; even to associationists like Mill and Bain they evaporated into "possibilities of sensation." Religion faded into a dead, stupid pantheism. As one American philosopher, quite orthodox but a most ingenious Monist puts it: "In the fullest sense of the word only the infinite exists; all else is relatively phenomenal and non-existent." A little farther on he ascribes to the finite "non-existent existence." Then he adds: "But these utterances are so easily misunderstood that they should be reserved for esoteric use and frugality is to be recommended even there."¹

But there is no need of thus making shipwreck both of sense and morals. There must indeed be One infinite cause of all. But as we shall see later on, that One out of self-sacrificing love has voluntarily limited his own activity by imparting something of his power to finite beings. Each thing is a factor in countless processes of causation planned and

¹ Bowne, *Metaphysics*, 101-2.

maintained by the Infinite. As thus a factor, the thing acts; and whatever acts, exists. Nor is there the slightest reason for conceiving this as "a sort of non-existent existence."

VII. *Relations of Space and Time*

The method which has proved so effective already in clearing up the perplexities of the old philosophy, we have now to apply to spatial and temporal relations. These indeed are not so utterly vague and self-contradictory as those of mere resemblance. Still they have a certain obscurity of their own which can be dispelled only by unveiling the causal relations implicit within them. Let me add that here I shall speak solely of space-relations leaving the reader to apply the argument to those of time.

(1) *The Reality of Space.* Does space actually exist or is it but an illusion forced upon us by some unhappy twist of the human mind? In answering this question I pass over the rather dubious contention of realists that we actually perceive so-called perceptual space. Instead of that I present what seems to me conclusive proof that it is literally impossible to think of space as non-existent. That proof can be given in a few words as follows:

We know our sensations, we discriminate one of them from another not through any attributes of their own but only through attributes of spatial objects perceived.

The sensation produced by a round object is not itself circular. The sensation of a mountain is no taller than the sensation of an ant-hill. The sensation of a red object is not itself painted red. In fine perceptive states have no discernible attributes of their own, we discriminate between them only through the spatial attributes of the objects perceived. Therefore, when we cancel the spatial attributes of objects perceived, we annihilate every possible means of distinguishing one perception from another. And since the other processes of thought—memory, imagination, conception—depend ultimately upon perceptions, we thus annihilate all thinking. The whole fabric of thought instantly collapses.

Do you object that the spatial world is not entirely cancelled, but regarded as only existing phenomenally, as a universal dream, as ideas externalized. But your ideas, whether inside or outside of you, are still, I suppose, ideas; and to think of ideas as having spatial attributes is the craziest of all self-contradictions. But, as we have just seen, they have no other attributes by which they can be discriminated from each other. And so once again all thinking melts down into one solid mass of unintelligibility.

(2) *What is Space?* The doubts concerning the reality of space have their main support in the difficulty of defining what it really is. But this difficulty is only another signal instance of our principle that all relations are incoherent and tend to self-

contradiction until we convert them into the causal relations which form their real gist. Let us then attempt to conceive of space as an indispensable factor in all processes of physical causation. Do you say that space is inactive, does nothing, neither produces nor resists motion, and therefore cannot be a factor in causal processes? I answer that everything else seems to be under the same impotence. Things, too, are inert; we have to interpolate into them some mystery of force to explain their activity. Things have their peculiar office, and so has space in those immeasurably wide and complex processes by which even the minutest results—say a speck of color on an insect's wing—are produced. Space indeed seems a more supreme factor than things: for if it is withdrawn motion becomes impossible and thus every physical process falls instantly to pieces.

The trouble with even our most recent philosophy is that it is still pre-scientific. It has never really taken into account that primary lesson of science—the complexity of effects. The art of the illusionists consists in cutting a causal process to pieces, and then showing that none of the factors by itself can do anything. For example, space is first shown to be inert, it is not a thing and therefore is nothing or non-existent. And so space being destroyed it is easy to show that things and motions are impossible. Thus heaven and earth vanish as at the stroke of a conjuror's wand.

Continuity of Space. Let me give in the most

compact form possible the proof that space is absolutely continuous. When we speak of the separation of objects we mean that there is space between them. But to think of space as separated into parts is impossible; for in order that the parts should be separate there would have to be *space between them* and consequently no separation of the parts. In other words the division of space into parts is a contradiction in terms. But Kant entirely ignored this unmistakable fact in his famous antinomies concerning the infinite divisibility of space: he did not see that space was not divisible at all, either finitely or infinitely. Spinoza saw it a hundred years before; and if Kant had seen it, we should have been saved from the paradoxes and skepticism engendered by his antinomies.

VIII. *Perception*

But this blur and darkening of thought due to overlooking the causal relation implicit in every sort of relation reached its climax in the modern controversy concerning perception.

At first modern illusionism insisted and rested upon this fallacy of resemblance in its crudest form. Berkeley's constant refrain is that an idea can be like nothing but an idea; a color or figure can be like nothing but another color or figure. That and "the inherence" theory are the Alpha and Omega of his argument. It never occurs to him to doubt

that our perceptions must be copies or images of the objects perceived. And to this day among both idealists and agnostics, this pictorial conception of knowledge has been the main staple of the argument for illusionism. Even that most superlatively transcendental of all American idealists, Royce, is not ashamed to argue that "the qualities of things need not, nay can not resemble the ideas that are produced in us. * * * Sound waves in the air are not like our musical sensations. * * * Nor are the aether waves that the sun sends us like our ideas when we see the sun."

Kant's Error. But Kant gave to the argument for illusionism an altogether new aspect. He lays little stress upon, in fact rarely mentions, the supposed proof resting upon the assumption that knowledge must be a copy or picture of the objects known. Instead of that he relies upon a subtle criticism of spatial and temporal relations; their enigmas and self-contradictions, he thinks, prove that space and time are only figments of the mind, mere "forms of perception." And with space and time gone, of course the whole extended universe goes too. .

Now the really fatal error infecting the whole of the Kantian criticism has never been recognized, I think, either by its foes or its friends. That error consists in an altogether false view of the nature of knowledge. He does not see that the gist, the centre and circumference of all genuine thinking and knowing consists in relating causes to their effects and conversely effects to their causes. Nay, more than that,

he regards this only true knowledge as only ignorance, as "appearance" or illusion. He repeats over and over again—frequently two or three times on a single page—that "we know nothing of what things may be in themselves, knowing only their appearances, *i.e.*, the representations which they cause in us by affecting our senses."¹ And he rejects this only true knowledge as mere illusion because somewhere in the back-ground of his thought there lurks a misty ideal of a nobler sort of knowledge which—alas!—the human mind can never attain. "We know not this thing in its internal constitution," he is continually sighing, "but only know its appearance."

Now this dim ideal of an unattainable knowledge, I am persuaded, is only a survival, the ghost of the crude view of sensation as a copy or picture. As such, it landed Kant in a tangle of self-contradiction and paradox. Why, for instance, should one who has renounced space as a false appearance puzzle himself over "the inner constitution of things"? Furthermore, Kant's successors and followers, while they generally reject his "Thing in itself," yet show themselves as much mystified and astray as he was. For they do not really argue against this "thing in itself," but merely load it with abuse. Thus Bradley within the compass of a single page vilifies it as "a wretched abstraction," as "utterly worthless and devoid of interest"—"an irrelevant ghost"—a false and empty abstraction—a sheer

¹ Kant, *Prolegomena*, 75.

self-contradiction—a “false idea”—and “an idol.”¹ Better than so many epithets would have been the detection of the fatal error in Kant’s philosophy and in his own—a false theory of knowledge. True knowledge consists in the relating of effects to their actual causes. To know anything is to know not what it is *like*, but what it *does*. Only when we know what it does do we know what it really is.

In the chapter upon Pragmatism I shall endeavor to more completely justify my theory of knowledge by showing how the truth in the conflicting systems now in vogue, is thus harmonized. And so I leave the matter for the present. And in regard to the general subject of perception, having in the previous section demonstrated the reality of space, and in this pointed out the fatal error vitiating the Kantian criticism, there seems no grave necessity for dwelling longer upon this rather thread-bare theme. In fact I have been long convinced, as many others are now beginning to be,² that the dispute concerning perception between the two rival schools is virtually a verbal one. But in so speaking I do not mean to disparage the high aim which idealism has claimed to pursue. That aim was to guarantee those primary convictions upon which the morality and religion of mankind repose. But such a guarantee cannot be gained in that way. This is abundantly proved by the history of the Maya doctrine in India and of Kantian illusionism in the nineteenth cen-

¹ Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 131.

² Woodbridge. In *Studies in Philosophy*, 147.

ture. Indeed, morality and religion would perish utterly if mankind believed that they could be defended only by accepting the paradoxes of idealism. But I hope to show in these pages that there is a better way.

IX. *The Concept*

Hegel's chief contribution to human thought was his doctrine of the concrete universal. Nor is it any discredit to him as a discoverer that his view was incomplete, neither very thorough nor profound. He saw that there was an element of truth in the orthodox realism of the Middle Ages which modern enlightenment had not regarded; that the true universal is more than an abstract something exemplified by the individual. Much less was it an imaginary collection of resembling individuals. In one passage at least he says that the true universal is not merely some common element in all of the kind, it is their Ground, their Substance.¹ It is something pervading and determining all the characteristics of each one and binding together its qualities. There Hegel is drawing very close to my theory of the concept as being, in its most radical meaning, the symbol of a causal process. But as usual he is carried away on the wings of his metaphor about the organism. And so he misses the heart, the essence of every concept as indicating that invariable process of causation, that mystic interplay of many factors creating the individuals of that particular

¹ Hegel. *Encycl. Werke*, VI. 339.

kind—whether a stone, a speck of dust, a human society, or a planetary system. That is no metaphor; it does not oblige us to think of the universe as a plant or an animal: it is plain, solid scientific fact.

But it shows the retrograde character of modern philosophy that Hegel's rudimentary view of the universal instead of being developed as it might have been, has faded more and more into a mere paradox until now a crude Nominalism reigns almost without a rival. Even Lotze,¹ subtle and thorough thinker as he undoubtedly was, abandoned concepts to their fate. He decides that the universal cannot claim to be called an idea "in any ordinary sense of that term. Words like color and tone are in truth only short expressions of logical problems whose solution cannot be compressed into the form of an idea. * * *

We cannot grasp the common element which our sensation testifies them to contain but which cannot by any effort of thought be really detached from their differences and made the material of a new and equally perceptible idea."

It is certainly a singular creed. In things of the same class, a common element revealed to sense but hidden from thought, of which indeed the mind cannot form so much as an idea. And yet this myth of a common element is a commonplace in modern philosophy. One American author² even asserts

¹ Lotze. *Logic*, p. 24.

² Porter. *Intellectual Science*, 331.

that the grand distinction between man and the brute is that the latter "has no power at all to think the *similar* as the same"—wherein I think the brute shows more sense than the man. For to speak of a common element in different things is the acme of absurdity: it is point-blank self-contradiction open and unashamed. And it never takes us one step beyond the old fallacy of resemblance—things are alike and *not* alike.

But put now in the place of this relation of mere resemblance, a causal relation. For example, red and green are not classed together as colors because there is a common element of color inside of each of them, but because both are resultants from one causal process—a process mathematically invariable and as universal as the known universe itself. Plato saw this invariability of concepts and suggested that they were causes. The mediaeval schoolmen adopted Plato's view; but neither he nor they, in those pre-scientific times, could comprehend the complexity of a causal process. Modern science, however, has made that idea clear as noon-day. Yet modern philosophy forgetting its Plato, scorning the Middle Ages, disregarding even the lessons of science, is still mumbling its senilities about the common element in things. Indiscernibles, it tells us, are identical; the similar is the same.

But I shall not rest here with abstract, metaphysical discussion. For this question concerning the essence of the concept is of supreme importance. If the essence of all concepts can be proved to be this

indicating of a causal process, it would be enough by itself—even without reference to what has been said in previous pages—to demonstrate my thesis that all thinking is a relating of cause and effect; for no act of thinking is possible save through the medium of concepts. Not confining myself, therefore, to psychological introspection, I shall make a wider appeal to the historic experience of mankind. I shall try to show that from the very first the human mind has dimly realized that a concept was the symbol of a causal relation. And that to this consciousness, the origin of both language and science is due.

The origin of concepts. It is now a well-established principle in philology that the majority of verbal roots express acts, and mostly acts which men in a primitive state of society are called upon to perform—such as digging, plaiting, weaving, striking, throwing, binding, etc.¹ Furthermore they are generally acts performed in common; for only thus could they become intelligible to the entire community, and only thus could the merely accidental elements be eliminated. And most important of all, we are told that the mere consciousness of the acts of digging, binding, etc., is not enough; only when the processes are such that their *results* remain perceptible—for example, in the hole dug, in the tree

¹ Muller. *Lectures on the Science of Thought*, 30.

struck down, in the reeds tied together as a mat—do men reach conceptual thoughts in language.¹

Could there be any clearer proof than this that concepts spring from the recognition of processes of causation? Or as Professor Noiré has expressed it: "The conception of *causality subsisting between things*. Verily this constitutes such a simple, plain and at the same time obvious and convincing means of distinguishing the *logos*, human reason from animal intelligence that it seems inconceivable that this manifest and clear boundary line should not long ago have been noted and established as such."²

The classifying process. We turn now from this unimpeachable proof presented by the origins of language to evidence of another kind, later, but equally conclusive. It is the testimony offered by man's prolonged effort to rightly classify natural things. But first of all we must get rid of the ancient superstition that true classifying consists merely in noting the similarities or resemblances of objects. Logicians and philosophers still cling to that idea with a sad tenacity; and yet a slight inspection of scientific methods ought to have taught them better. But we have proved that a mere relation of resemblance in and by itself is vague, misleading and even self-contradictory. This principle we wish now to apply to the history of classification.

We find that at a quite early period men, even the half-civilized and the savage, had succeeded in

¹ Ibid. 31.

² Noiré, *Origin of Language*, 47.

classifying living things, so far as they were known, into their species or lowest kinds. The reason of this success is evident. They had constantly before their eyes the processes of production upon which the resemblances depended, and hence it was not difficult to distinguish between specific and non-specific characteristics.

But concerning inorganic things there was no such knowledge; their processes of production were hidden in a darkness which the most enlightened could not penetrate. Hence we find that every effort to classify these inorganic things ended in complete and even comical failure. So great a genius as that of Aristotle could invent no better scheme for arranging inanimate things than under four such kinds as "the hot and dry, the hot and wet, the cold and dry and the cold and wet."

Note, furthermore, that ancient classification even of organic things was confined solely to species. For thousands of years learned men—Theophrastus, for instance, whom Aristotle selected to be his successor—had been studying botany; and yet until three centuries ago they had not advanced beyond the childish division of the plant-world into "trees, shrubs and herbs." But light dawned at last when Gessner discovered that true genera could be formed "by noting characteristics drawn from *the process of fructification*." Since then naturalists in their long search for a true or natural system of classification—as Darwin expressly affirms¹—"have al-

¹ Darwin, *Origin of Species*, Chap. XIV.

ways been unconsciously guided not by mere resemblances, but by the principle of inheritance." But principle of inheritance is but another phrase for process of production. What better proof than this unconscious testimony could be offered for my doctrine that relations of resemblance are valueless until converted into causal relations?

And under the guidance of this same principle, Darwin himself was led to that sublime discovery which has revolutionized modern thought.

Why then should logic remain eternally myopic, seeing only the rough, blurred resemblances, blind to that upon which they depend? Hegel, as we have seen, had a faint glimpse of the truth, but it faded away into a metaphor. But logic need not shrink into poetry; it needs only to remember that a concept must be understood as pointing not to a bunch of mere similarities, but to the process of production upon which the similarities depend. Thus we surmount the seeming contradiction between the Darwinian view of the concept as in a continuous state of transition and the Platonic view of it as abiding and changeless. The characteristics even in their variation are the necessary results of a process of production that never changes. Just as the infinitely varying motion of a falling stone is the resultant of the invariable process of gravitation.

Abstraction. Another line of evidence is opened by considering that ignoble prejudice against "the abstract" which Hegel and his pupils have done so much to foster. The master was indeed an adept in

ambiguities, but the pupils speak out boldly. Thus Bradley, for example, sends forth a book of five hundred pages crammed with destructive criticism hinging mainly upon the singular claim that to conceive is to "mutilate." We are there taught that "all analytic judgments are false." Why? Because in judging we must abstract, and in abstracting "we have separated, divided, abridged, dissected, we have mutilated the given."

But surely all that is mere foolishness. In abstracting, say the red color of an apple, you do not divide or dissect anything; you simply fix your attention, focalize your thought upon a particular aspect presented by the apple. You do not destroy, as Bradley asserts you do, "that vital interconnection of things which is their life." On the contrary, you enlarge and illumine that interconnection. You still consider—if you are sane—the color as inseparably connected with the apple, but also as connected with other factors, in the vast process of causation that has produced the color—with the sun, the aether waves, the wondrous mechanism of nerve and brain. All these amplifying, illumining functions of the abstracting act, functions opening up such endless vistas to man and lifting him into communion with the Infinite, all these Bradley overlooks in his unfounded fear that thought may be "mutilated."

The Meaning of the Copula. Here we have another theme that has long been enveloped in hopeless controversy and paradox by the failure of logicians to reach the deepest meaning of the concept. Even

the sober-minded Sigwart ends his rather prolix inquiry into the matter with the half-despairing question: "But how does it happen that the verb to be, which is the expression of actual existence, assumes a formal function in the copula whereby it loses its meaning—nay, even seems to contradict it?"¹

My answer to that question is that in the copula "to be" neither loses nor contradicts, but rather reveals its true and deepest meaning. For it is now quite generally agreed that being is known to us only as behavior, what it does or suffers. In other words, to exist is to be in causal relation with other existents. And that is precisely its meaning in the copula; it asserts a causal relation between the subject and the predicate.

What adds to the cogency of this interpretation of the copula is that there is no other. If you reject this you must either accept Hegel's view that the subject is identical with the predicate, which is absurd on its face. Or you must cling to the common view which does not even pretend to explain the copula.

Such then is my summary of the proof—many different lines of evidence, starting from many different sources and all converging upon the common conclusion—that a concept essentially means, not a bundle of resemblances, but a process of causation.

¹ Sigwart, *Logic*, I, 100.

Reasoning

Let me first refer to the empirical theory of reasoning as it is presented by an eminent American thinker, Professor James. He begins by claiming that "the most elementary single difference between the human mind and that of brutes lies in the deficiency on the brute's part to associate ideas by similarity." But that is hardly an obvious truth. Rather it would seem as if the brute excelled the man in this power of detecting the most minute and subtle similarities. What man could rival the blood-hound in tracking the foot-prints of his prey? And even among men, the savage in this respect surpasses the civilized; it would seem as if this automatic power of noting resemblances decayed as man grew more reflective and rational. And yet, James regards this association by similarity as the crowning trait of human genius at its loftiest. He even describes Newton's immortal discovery as due to "a flash of similarity" between an apple and the moon.¹

But let us preserve our gravity, and consider what really happened, if the apple incident is true. It flashed upon Newton, not that apples and moons were similar, but that two events the most absolutely dissimilar that could be imagined—the fall of an apple and a celestial motion—might yet prove to be the products of one invariable process of causation.

¹ *Principles of Psychology*, II. 360.

Dissatisfied with Kepler's theory that the planetary motions were caused by angels pushing the planets around, he devoted years of incredible toil not to detecting a similarity between apples and the moon but to demonstrating this causal process. And, as I have shown in my *Philosophy of History*,¹ all the great triumphs of inductive reasoning which have created modern science were achieved in like manner. Sometimes it was a new process discovered or demonstrated; sometimes the unveiling of a hidden factor in a process otherwise familiar. Next to Newton's discovery, the most notable instance of the first kind was the creation of optics by Snell's discovery of the mathematical character of refraction which for centuries had been sought for in vain, baffling even the genius of a Kepler.² Acoustics also had a precisely similar origin.³ The most signal instance of the second kind was the creation of chemistry as a true science by attending to what had previously been a *neglected factor* in chemical processes. And yet this factor was the most potent, the most widely diffused of all chemical agents, the atmosphere. It is pitiful to read how many otherwise skillful experiments made even as far back as the Middle Ages, came to naught and how many brilliant discoveries were nipped in the bud by this neglect to take account of the atmosphere or its chief constituent, oxygen. But at last comes

¹ *Phil. History*, 60, 189, 254, seq.

² *Ibid*, 262.

³ *Ibid*, 261.

Lavoisier who discards "phlogiston" and its "negative weight"—in place thereof puts oxygen. And as by magic the previous confusion and absurdity disappear. Everything becomes orderly and sane. After so long waiting, chemistry has become a science.¹

But it is impossible here to go through the list of the sciences. Enough has been said, I trust, to show that the essence and aim of scientific reasoning is to discover causal processes previously hidden either in whole or part.

The Emptiness of Idealism. But it may be objected that the idealists have anticipated me. Lotze, for example, proclaims that thought "always consists in adding to the reproduction or severance of a connection in ideas, the accessory notion of a ground for their coherence or non-coherence." And he adds that "this peculiarity of thought will govern the whole of our subsequent exposition" of Logic.² But it is all a mirage. For, Lotze—thorough Kantian as he is, does not really believe in causation but only in sequence. He is tied as much as the crude empiricist to the fallacy of resemblance; to him causality is only a name for the *identity* of the successive members in a series of mysteriously interconnected results. In the long run he finds no basis for reasoning and truth except in "intuition" and faith.³

¹ Ibid, 194 and 265.

² Lotze, *Logic*, 5.

³ Jones, *Philosophy of Lotze*, 267, seq.

There is an equal emptiness in the phrases used by the Neo-Hegelians to describe reasoning. For to them all "cause and effect is irrational appearance and cannot be reality."¹ Their phrases about "systematic inference," or "the articulated whole and its casts are only a new disguise for Hegel's old metaphor of the organism. And this vague, shadowy metaphor sheds no light either upon the act of reasoning or the causal processes of nature. Not even in biology is this idle metaphor of any use. Let us remember that in some simple, unicellular structure, an amoeba, we may now behold an actual, perceptible example of that physiological process by the multiplication of which all the infinite variety of living things is produced. And one of the most eminent of biologists tells us that the real development of his science has hinged upon this *visible disclosure of the physiological process*. Only as inquiry, he says, has turned from the highest organisms to study in the lowest the process of life in the concrete has biology in theory and practise made much progress.

And so in all the sciences, inductive reasoning has for its essence and aim, the disclosure of causal processes either perceptible or verifiable. To that fact the whole history of the scientific movement testifies. To that I add nothing but an attempt at demonstrating that this causality is real; so real that it cannot be frittered away into mere sequence or into some vague metaphor likening the universe to a plant or animal.

¹ Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 58.

And in that attempt at demonstration, I now claim, with supreme confidence, to have completely succeeded. The various relations which thought recognizes, have been found to be unintelligible and meaningless until we unfold the causal relations implicit within them. All thinking in its three grand divisions, perception, conception and reasoning, has been proved to be essentially a relating of cause and effect. Therefore, the cancelling of causality logically involves the entire collapse and extinction of thought. Thus Hume's problem is finally solved. The great barrier which for nearly two centuries has barred any real progress in philosophy, has been removed.

So much then has been accomplished by thus unveiling for the first time in the history of speculation—the true secret of thought. And now we turn to still more momentous problems that must be solved, if human society is to be saved from impending anarchy and ruin.

CHAPTER II

GOD

I. *The Ontological Proof of God's Existence*

AMONG all metaphysical themes, the ontological proof for God's existence is the most important, the most often discussed and the most thoroughly misunderstood. Kant rightly asserted that all other proofs were based upon this ontological one. Yet he claims to have refuted and demolished this basal proof by simply showing that a hundred imaginary dollars were not the same as a hundred real dollars in a man's pocket. How shallow that refutation is, how utterly it misses the real force of the argument, can from our present point of view be very clearly shown in a few words.

For Kant conceives the ontological argument as assuming that the idea of any object whatsoever proves the existence of that object. But such a way of conceiving the argument is not only erroneous, it is supreme silliness. The very essence of the argument is that the idea of God stands alone and apart from all other ideas, is absolutely unique; of

it alone is it true that the idea of the object proves the existence of the object. Why?

To fully understand this reason why, we must substitute for the word "being" in the ordinary rendering of the argument, the word "cause." Then the infallibility of the proof shines forth as the light of the sun. For I have now demonstrated that to deny the reality of causation involves the extinction of thought. But if causation is real, there must be an infinitely real and perfect cause. Why infinite, you ask? Because whatever is finite or limited must be an effect and therefore not a complete cause.

But why—you persist—may not these finite things which seem to have a sort of mixed nature, partly cause and partly effect, be after all the only causes? Because by such a supposition you annihilate all real causation and thus put an end to all thinking. For, these finite things, with their mixed nature, form by themselves nothing but an indefinite series, a mere sequence. In other words you are back again in the meshes of Hume's paradox which substitutes sequence for causality. But we are now rid of that paradox: for I have shown that the concept of sequence—like all other concepts—becomes entirely unintelligible and meaningless when the idea of causality is cancelled.

This then is the ontological argument in brief. To deny the existence of God—that is of an infinitely real and perfect cause—is to deny all causation, and that is the suicide of thought.

II. *The Cosmological and Teleological Proofs.*

The ontological proof is complete in itself, so incontrovertible that it needs no support or confirmation from other sources. Its convincing power must have been *felt* more or less consciously by all rational minds long before it gained articulate expression even in such imperfect forms as those given it in the Middle Ages. The chief office of the other proofs—cosmological and teleological—is to clarify this conviction and remove obscurities gathering around it.

(1) The essence and aim of the cosmological proof is to show that the creative activity of God—of the infinitely real and perfect Cause of all—must be conceived *as a self-sacrificing activity*. For in the first place, only through this conception can the existence of God be harmonized with that of independent finite beings. In so far as the latter possess any degree of independence whatsoever God has voluntarily limited his own activity for the sake of others. And in the second place, only through this conception can any adequate motive for creation be made to appear. For the Infinite has need of nothing; and if, *per impossible*, it did have needs, then in supplying them its activity would be caused by something lacking and alien to itself, and to that extent the Infinite Cause would become an effect requiring another cause; and we should be again on the downward path of the infinite regress. In fine,

activity on the part of the Infinite inevitably implies self-sacrificing effort for the sake of others.

I claim no originality for the insight just given. Indeed one of the strangest things in the strange career of modern philosophy is that it should have been so utterly blind to this conception of activity for the sake of others being inseparably involved in the very idea of an Infinite Cause. For that conception is really one of the oldest possessions of human thought. More than two thousand years ago it was proclaimed in India by the Sankhya philosophy in the following words: "Every intelligent being acts either from self-interest or beneficence * * * a creator who has all that he can desire has no interest in creating anything. The demiurge would be unjust and cruel."¹ Here my principle is taken for granted, but creation is denied on the pessimistic ground that it could not be an act of "beneficence." And Sankhara, the famous foe and critic of the Sankhya system, concurs with it upon this point; so in both of the rival Hindu schools this principle was a common-place. All that I can claim is to have restored what has always lain dim and mutilated in human consciousness—to have established it as an indubitable deduction from the demonstration of causality given in the preceding chapter.

(2) Upon the argument from design I need say but little, since those who entirely reject the other proofs are generally inclined to look with some favor upon this. Kant declares that "this argument de-

¹ Gough, *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, 206-8.

serves always to be mentioned with respect. It is the oldest and clearest of all proofs and best adapted to convince the reason of the mass of mankind. It animates our study of nature, etc." But then he goes on to show that by itself this argument is insufficient to prove God's existence, that it must fall back upon the cosmological and ontological proofs, and these are worthless.

At present those who still claim to believe in God's existence seem driven to this strange *impasse*. While the ontological argument, as Kant rightly maintained, is the basis upon which the other two must rest, it is the one most misunderstood and quite generally rejected; but the other two—especially the proof from design—are received with favor. Thus the proof of God's existence seems to be in the very perilous position of a pyramid resting upon its apex. But by my insight just given all that is exactly reversed. The pyramid of proof stands solid upon its base, wide as thought, simple and strong as truth must ever be. And upon it rest the two other forms of proof, far loftier, firmer, more convincing than ever before.

III. *God's Personality*

McTaggart, the bravest and most candid of English Hegelians, boasts that "they who deny it (God's personality) were never so numerous as at present. And those who do hold it, hold it, it can scarcely be

doubted, with far less confidence.”¹ That is, undoubtedly, all too true. For example, Lotze, the most renowned of all recent thinkers who have posed as champions of theism, finally bases his belief in God’s personality solely upon the ground that “we *feel* the impossibility of its non-existence * * * many other attempts may be made to exhibit the internal necessity of this conviction as logically demonstrable; but all of them must fail.”² Now if Lotze is right, if our belief in a personal God has no logical evidence but rests solely on the evanescent moods of feeling, then this belief is certainly doomed to disappear, and that right speedily. For even in the palmiest days of “primitive credulity,” and in the darkest of “the Dark Ages” men would have disdained to consciously rest their most sacred beliefs upon any such flimsy basis as feeling. They never doubted that there was solid evidence for their convictions—nature, revelation, the authority of the wise, etc. They knew too well the folly and fickleness of feeling to trust to that. Will then this present age, so proud of its skepticism, so well trained by modern science to insist always upon the strict verifying of its beliefs, be very apt to long bow down before convictions unprovable, attested by naught but blind formless feeling? Especially, if the conviction is one like that of a personal God which the vast majority of men would gladly cast off if they could.

¹ McTaggart, *Hegels' Cosmology*, 91.

² Lotze, *Microcosmus*, II. 670.

Listen, for instance, to such words as these from an eminent writer upon natural history themes, John Burroughs: "When I look up at the starry heavens at night and reflect upon what it is that I really see there, I am constrained to say, 'There is no God.'

* * * It is not the works of some God that I see there. I see no lineaments of personality, etc."¹ Or, again, from the same source²: "We must get rid of the great moral governor or head director. He is a fiction of our own brains. We must recognize only nature the All; call it God if we will but divest it of all anthropological conceptions. * * * But this paternal Providence above nature—events are constantly breaking it down."

Such is the plain drift of modern culture. And with the whirl and gusts of mere emotion do you expect to turn back this tremendous tide? Such a supposition is absurdity incarnate.

We are standing now before the near approach of the most irretrievable calamity that ever threatened the human race. It would seem that human life—never too happy—must henceforth be carried on without any belief in God or freedom, the moral order of the world or real basis for the distinction between right and wrong. Of the old treasures of the race nothing apparently remains but some vague sentimentalism and a few empty phrases. But in the face of this mental and moral anarchy now so plainly impending. I have ventured to offer my

¹ Burroughs, *The Light of Day*, 164.

² *Ibid*, 169.

demonstration that God still lives. I have solved Hume's problem and thus proved the reality of causation. From that I have deduced, directly and simply, the fact that there must be an infinitely real and perfect Cause whose activity is that of self-sacrificing love. Nothing else is needed to demonstrate the personality of God. And this demonstration is not disturbed in the slightest degree by such objections as those offered by Burroughs and a host of like-minded thinkers, that the universe is very big or that its eternal order is not altered at the beck of human whims.

If that demonstration is valid, it is of incalculable value. It is worth more to America than a thousand battleships. For it would save us from that impending anarchy, mental and moral, in comparison with which all the other perils of the Republic are but a bagatelle.

Ought not our teachers of philosophy, then, lay aside their little systems and Chinese puzzles long enough to determine whether this demonstration shall stand or fall?

IV. *Sacrificial Theology*

But there is one real difficulty connected with my demonstration that doubtless has already occurred to the reader. I have shown that the idea of God regarded as an infinite, self-sacrificing Cause acting for the sake of others is readily deducible from the idea of causality conceived in its completeness and

perfection. The passage from the latter to the former is so plain and open, that even uninstructed minds incapable of formally making the deduction, yet feel its force instinctively. To him who comprehends, however faintly, the full meaning of causality, God manifests Himself in every thing and event. Not a leaf stirs, not the simplest of all the complex processes of nature is beheld but what the mind is normally carried up to the thought of a God of wisdom and love.

But if this is true why has this pure conception of the Deity so rarely prevailed in the history of the race? Why has it been degraded into so many grotesque, even demonic forms? Why did Buddhism, the religion of one-third of the human race, start upon its great mission by absolutely renouncing the idea of God? The answer is that while this impulse Godward is so universal there are in human nature many evil, irrational impulses, many diseases of the soul that contend against it mightily.

One type of these opposing forces very clearly unfolds itself from bad to worse throughout the whole history of Hindu religion. The farther we go back in the history of India the purer and more rational its religion appears. In the earlier Vedic hymns there are no evil gods; there is even a tendency to think of all the deities as but so many names for one God. But the most characteristic feature of this early Vedic faith was what has been aptly called its apotheosis of sacrifice. Sacrifice was the first principle of morals; nay, more, it was

conceived as the primary condition upon which the cosmic order depended. If there were no sacred offerings, the succession of days and nights, the course of the seasons, the steadfastness of the firmament would cease.¹ In fine, "the sacrificial act was the instrument of creation."² "In the beginning of time the Supreme Being created all things *by the sacrifice of himself*; he, Prajapati, having divided himself into three parts."³ In a famous Vedic hymn it is said: "So the gods through sacrifice earned a right to sacrifice."⁴ We may pronounce all this preposterous, call it with Oldenberg, "empty mummary, a disease of Vedic poetry."⁵ Nevertheless the hard fact remains that thus dimly and in fantastic forms the Vedas preserved the primitive view of creation as an act of self-sacrifice on the part of the Infinite. That it was a survival from an earlier tradition is proved by many facts. For instance a similar account of creation is given in the Scandinavian Edda.⁶ And the Zendavesta represents Ahura Mazda as offering sacrifices to the lower divinities whom he had created.

But mere feeling, being vague and undefined, tends always to one or the other of two extremes—exaggeration or exhaustion. In Indian civilization, as I have shown in my *Philosophy of History*, the

¹ *Manu*, III. 76.

² Williams, *Brahmanism and Hinduism*, 44.

³ *Brhaddevata*, *Harv. Or. Series*, II. 369.

⁴ *Rig Veda*, X. 90, 16.

⁵ *Buddha*, p. 11.

⁶ Ragozia, *Vedic India*, 382; and Menzies, *Hist. Religions*, 68.

sense of causality ever tends to the first named extreme—to ever growing excess. The thought of the Infinite Cause swallowed up all else: finite results seemed insignificant; the world was naught but Maya or illusion. Under the influence of this illusionism, life took on a gloomy, pessimistic tinge: self-sacrificing love degenerated into the self-torture of the ascetic. And so, as I have already stated, both the skeptical Sankhya and the orthodox philosophy denied the creation of the world on the ground that the Infinite could not have created it for his own sake since he had need of nothing; nor for the sake of others since for them its creation would have been an act not of beneficence, but of injustice and cruelty. Thus Brahminism became an impersonal pantheism; and Buddhism recognized no God but the iron chain of Karma.

(2) In the West, on the contrary, the sense of causality tended to the other extreme—that of exhaustion and decay. There only practical, tangible results counted. And there, consequently, we see the idea of sacrifice dwindling into the idea of a commercial transaction. This degeneration is visible even among Semitic peoples; at first sacrifice was an act of "sacramental communion," a feast of fellowship and love between the god and his worshippers who were considered as closely akin; but in later times sacrifice lost this high significance, faded into the sordid idea of a mercantile affair, an inter-change of gifts. Above all, among the utilitarian Romans sacrifice meant absolutely nothing but a shrewd bargaining with the gods; they even thought it possible occa-

sionally to over-reach a benignant deity and the human debtor always availed himself of such an opportunity to out-wit his celestial creditor. On the other hand, the god would cheat the man if he had the chance and so the worshipper had to be very careful to avoid any mistakes in form which would enable the god to evade his part of the contract. From self-sacrifice to sordidness—that is the whole history of Paganism in the West.

(3) In the Middle Ages we see the restoration of what had been lost in classic antiquity—man's confidence in a universal Cause acting for the sake of others. But this restored confidence no longer rested solely upon vague feeling, instinctive, unconscious reason, but upon the authority of what was regarded as a divine revelation. Thus it was preserved from the worst exaggerations of Hindu feeling such as pantheism, Maya and metempsychosis. Still, inseparable from a faith so rigidly outlined and fixed in form there were many perils and far-reaching evils, some account of which has been given in my larger work and need not be repeated here.¹ Suffice it to quote the words of a clear-sighted historian: "The presence of the Infinite, whether to an individual or a race, is bought at a great cost. * * * Through this *selva oscura* lay the path from ancient to modern civilization, and few will be disposed to assert with Rousseau and Gibbon that the cost was greater than the gain."²

¹ *Phil. History*, 171-9.

² Bury, *Later Roman Empire*, 1, 16.

The lesson of the Middle Ages is that neither feeling nor faith can fully guarantee that upon which human progress depends—confidence in the infinite, self-sacrificing Cause of all.

(4) For very soon mediaeval assurance began to succumb to modern criticism. The climax was reached in the general acceptance of the Kantian philosophy which—"unable to solve Hume's problem"—surrendered causality as nothing but a name for an indefinite series of events between which the mind "feigned" some mysterious connection. Thus an altogether new ill was added to the burden of humanity already heavy enough. Even Hindu philosophy, revelling in illusions, had never dreamed of listing causation among them. But now although many theorists still prate about causation, yet what they mean is something quite different—sequence, "identity" of effects, or perchance, Mr. Bosanquet's "articulated whole and its parts." And this decay of belief in causality, as I have shown, must inevitably carry with it a decay of the belief in God. Nay, more, the entire dissolution of the latter must be speedier than the dissolution of the former, since it has more enemies to contend against. For no one, I presume, has really any very bitter feeling towards the theoretic principle of causation. But quite apart from the Christian revelation, the ordinary experiences of life do certainly seem to teach that there is native in the human breast no slight degree of "enmity against God."

CHAPTER III

MORALS

I. *Human Freedom*

KANT was plainly right in declaring that morality without freedom is impossible: whatever one *ought* to do he *can* do. Nor does it make the slightest difference whether he is prevented from acting morally by the compulsion of outward physical force or by that of his inward character or habits of life. The attempt to make such a distinction seems to me one of the many pitiful subterfuges in our modern philosophy which are far more disgraceful to it than even its evident failure to solve the problems set before it.

And so we come straightway to the very heart of ethical science—the proof that man is the free and therefore responsible cause of his own actions. And I wish to say at the start that I enter upon this task with full consciousness of its difficulties and its perils. The average teacher of the philosophy now in vogue will look upon such an attempt very much as he would upon an attempt to prove that the sun “do move.” I expose myself to the sneer of a Brad-

ley saying: "Free Will is a mere lingering chimera. Certainly no writer who respects himself can be called on any longer to treat it seriously."¹

Nevertheless, I take the risk of treating the question "seriously," and challenge all determinists to show any fatal flaw in my argument.

The Burden of Proof. There is at least a *prima facie* proof of man's freedom and responsibility in the simple, incontrovertible fact that he is a conscious being, knowing the nature of his act and the trend of its results. No matter how much he may be influenced by his environment, by heredity, acquired habits or character, he is at least a conscious factor, an accomplice in the evil act. Nothing can acquit him of moral responsibility except positive, full proof that he was compelled to so act, could not act otherwise. Therefore, the burden of proof lies upon the determinist. He must be able to strictly prove that the evil act was the result of real compulsion either from without or from within. But just there is the secret of this wretched controversy about freedom. The determinist, as I expect to show, has not a shred of any such strict proof; his theory rests on a sheer assumption. But he throws the burden of proof upon his opponent. The latter must show that he is *not* thus compelled; and so far he has had little evidence to offer except that most of mankind so believe. So this gravest of all human issues lapses into a wrangle, a flood of rhetoric and a whirlwind of words.

¹ Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 435 Note.

Some uneasy consciousness of this, I imagine, lies at the root of such impudent assertions as the one just quoted from Bradley. The burden of proof is indisputable. Determinism is an effort to shuffle the responsibility for an evil act upon another; and we are all agreed that such an attempt adds a new element of unspeakable baseness to wrongdoing unless we can clearly prove our non-responsibility. Indeed, it is this which turns misconduct into sin. For, according to determinism, the responsible party is not the evil-doer but the God who made him.

The Law of Causation. But the determinist will claim that he has positive, invincible proof of his doctrine to offer. He will appeal to the so-called Law of Causation that every change must have a cause. That, he will maintain, is a universal and necessary principle which proves the truth of determinism. Now, the only full and satisfactory answer to this is the one I am about to give; and it never has been given before in any book or treatise. It is as follows. The determinist confounds two very different truths: the one, *The universal law of causation*; the other, *an inductive discovery concerning motions made barely three centuries ago*. Let us consider them both.

First, the law of causation is indeed of universal application. For it rests upon the evident fact that every change is an abstraction and, therefore, it must be an effect dependent at least upon that from which it has been abstracted. A change cannot exist

by itself independently of something that changes. But the law goes no farther than that.

The second truth is the inductive discovery made three centuries ago that a thing never changes its motions unless it is acted upon and *forced* to change them by some other thing. But it is sheer assumption and utterly unscientific to arbitrarily extend this induction from the realm of things and their motions to the realm of mind and its volitions without giving any valid ground for such extension. Therefore determinism is driven to fall back upon the law of causation; and that is fully satisfied by considering the mind or self as the cause of its own volitions.

Thus determinism mixes up in dire confusion two truths; the one of universal application but perfectly consistent with human freedom; the other, one for the extension of which over the psychical sphere no proof can be given. And with this I leave the matter.

Responsibility. The older determinists strove hard to retain the idea of responsibility, while denying freedom. It was really but the device, so familiar in modern speculation, of retaining a word while giving to it a meaning quite contrary to that it had always had in ordinary usage. But moral science has now become so thoroughly demoralized that the determinists of to-day seem to regard such timid devices as no longer needful. Thus Professor James, in his recent apology for Pragmatism announces that "a man, woman or child ought to be

ashamed to plead any such pitiful principle as imputability"—by which he means moral responsibility.¹ When our chief universities teach the youth of America such lessons as these, it would look as if the age of anarchy was not very far distant.

Determinism then is altogether indefensible. The burden of proof is upon it. Yet it has no particle of proof to offer—nothing but the mere assertion that what is true of motions must be true of thought and will. And with this I turn aside from the question of freedom for the present.

II. *The Sacrificial Theory of Morals*

"Goodness is an appearance: it is phenomenal and therefore self-contradictory."² So proclaims a writer whom I quote often on account of his unrivalled genius in the dubious art of discovering self-contradictions. And he goes on to show us wherein this sad self-discrepancy lies—to wit, in the conflict between the principle of self-assertion and that of self-sacrifice. The ends sought by these two antagonistic principles, he says "Are each alike unattainable" in the finite sphere although in the Absolute they may be transcended. And finally, "Most emphatically no self-assertion nor any self-sacrifice, nor any goodness or morality has as such any reality in the Absolute. Goodness is a subor-

¹ James, *Pragmatism*, 118.

² Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 422.

dinate and therefore a self-contradictory aspect of the universe."

Few have carried the demoralization of morals to such stupendous heights of paradox as that. Still some such discrepancy of principles has been recognized by all moralists: it has been the main pivot upon which ethical controversies have turned. Now here let us try that method which we have found so successful in solving other problems of speculation. Instead of trying to hide the obvious differences between these two principles, turning and twisting them so that they may seem alike or even identical, let us advance from relations of resemblance to causal ones. Let us see what will happen if we consider these contrasted principles of self-sacrifice and self-assertion as standing to each other in the relation of cause and effect.

Self-sacrifice. By self-sacrificing acts I understand those that are done, primarily, for the sake of others. They need not be exclusively deeds of charity; they may be social duties performed or laws obeyed with a conscious design of promoting the general welfare even at the cost of some loss, pain or inconvenience to ourselves. But the self-denial, the merging of one's own interest in the regard for others must be the paramount consideration, the mainspring of action, *the cause*. And self-assertion, the promoting of one's own interest must be subordinated thereto as but a result to be hoped for, but ever apt to be counteracted by untoward circumstances. Wherever the self-sacrificing spirit is

supreme or causal and self-interest is subordinated thereto as but its possible result, there and there alone is virtue.

"In every-day life," says the writer just quoted, "a man can seek the general welfare in his own, and can find his own end accomplished in the general. * * * But for popular ethics not only goodness itself, but each of its one-sided factors are fixed as absolute. Goodness is apparently now to be the co-incidence of two ultimate goods, but it is hard to see how such an end can be ultimate or reasonable. * * * In short, the bare conjunction of independent reals is an idea which contradicts itself." In those few words there is a perfect nest of errors. (1) Common-sense ethics does *not* consider the self-seeking impulse as "absolute"; the virtue of prudence becomes the vice of selfishness when it has no higher origin than the brute instinct of self-preservation. (2) Self-sacrificing love is not an "aspect" of self-assertion any more than the sun is an aspect of the little germ which it lifts from its earth tomb into light, growth and beauty. (3) The self-regarding impulse is not an "independent real," but always dependent and relative—always a blunder and a sin where it does not spring from a kindly and loving spirit. (4) The conjunction of the two principles ceases to be "an idea that contradicts itself" when we conjoin them, not in the vague self-contradictory relation of "identity and difference," but simply as cause and effect.

Through this sacrificial theory of ethics we are

delivered from the errors of other ethical systems besides the Hegelian. We are saved, for instance, from the ascetic tendency which ruled the morality of India and the Middle Ages; for, causes can be known only through their results; and therefore there can be no true self-sacrifice in a self-torture hurtful to the actor and beneficial to no one else. And similarly we are saved from the formalism of Kantian ethics which outlawed happiness and reduced duty to the grim restraint of an abstract, universal law. Thirdly, it delivers us from that chief of all ethical abominations, the Pharisaic ideal of self-perfection or "self-realization"; man should indeed seek to perfect himself, but when that is not subordinated to the higher impulse, when it is made the all-engrossing aim, the source and mainspring of action, it can lead to nothing but "the whited sepulchre full of dead men's bones."

III. *The Moral Order of the World.*

But it avails little to have proved man's freedom and to have found the essential principle of morals unless we can answer this third question: What are the sanctions of morality? Why should a man sacrifice his own desires and advantage, suffer loss and pain for the sake of others? Note now how incredibly inept the ordinary answers are.

Utilitarianism. Before giving the Utilitarian's answer let me say a good word for the system itself

as standing for at least one indubitable truth. That truth is that moral laws, like physical ones, must be verified by their results. By countless experiments conducted at an incalculable cost of pain and blood we have discovered certain rules of conduct that seem in the main conducive to human welfare. And even if the code had been divinely revealed, experiment would have been needed for its proper interpretation. For example, the Middle Ages and modern times, though bowing before the same sacred code differ much in moral sentiment and life, because each has given a special prominence to some particular part of the code. And universally the worst iniquities of mankind have sprung not from the willful transgression of some known precept of morality but from the unconscious obscuration of it by the over-shadowing importance ascribed to some other precept. The only safeguard against such obliquities is the appeal to experience, the constant testing of conduct by its influence upon the felicity of the race.

Utilitarianism stands for that truth and deserves credit therefore. But when our present question is put to it, its answers are too silly to be even laughed at. Witness, for example, Mill's answer; each man naturally seeks his own happiness, therefore all men will seek the happiness of all. In other words, one man can jump across a brook, therefore all men can jump across the Atlantic.

Social Influences. Others imagine society to be the sole source of ethical sanctions. One Western

professor at least can see nothing in virtue but the love of praise and the fear of punishment.¹ But that is certainly—to say nothing of graver offenses—to mistake the effect for the cause. Society is the creation of the self-sacrificing spirit, not its creator. Society indeed does not seem to be very efficient even as a mere servant of righteousness. Her public laws are directed only against a few vices that happen to hurt her most. And as for the love of praise, that indeed is a mighty motive in human life, but it seems far less potent in fostering virtue than in engendering hypocrisy, avarice, pride and a whole brood of treacheries.

But instead of further negative criticism, let me quote that notable confession of the most candid and thoughtful of all Utilitarians—Sidgwick²—at the close of his chief work. “Hence the whole system of our beliefs in the intrinsic reasonableness of conduct must fall, without an hypothesis, unverifiable by experience, reconciling the Individual with the Universal Reason, without a belief in some form or other that the moral order which we see imperfectly realized in the actual world is yet actually perfect. * * * Reject this belief and the Cosmos of Duty is reduced to a Chaos, and the prolonged effort of the human intellect to frame a perfect ideal of rational conduct is seen to have been foredoomed to failure.

But that belief in the moral order of the world

¹ *Studies in Philosophy*, V. *The Moral Judgment*, 100-135.

² *Methods of Ethics*, 473.

I have now established by demonstrating the existence of an Infinite Cause whose activity is for the sake of others. To deny that existence is to cancel all causality and that means the utter extinction of thought. It is idle to attempt to establish this belief in the way ordinarily adopted, by an abstract generalization from the chequered, conflicting experiences of life. That is manifest when we remember how our estimate of life changes with our ever changing moods: in one mood all is brightness, in the next all is dark and evil.

The Immorality of Nature. But do not the injustice and inequalities so evident in life, prove that Nature is unmoral, indifferent to right or wrong? The answer now almost universally made is in the affirmative. But Jesus, whose insight into morals has revolutionized the world, did not think so. On the contrary he takes this indifference, this unswerving uniformity of Nature as his chosen symbol and proof of God's love. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."

And we can now readily comprehend the splendor of that view so contradictory of common opinion. Nature veils reward and punishment in order that true freedom and virtue may be developed. God is no slave-driver standing behind us, with a lash ready for every evil act and a bribe for every good one. If his judgments were "speedily executed" we should be as moral as pigs are when they run to the trough at the call of the swine-herd. But

through darkness, suffering and unrequited toil man climbs to all that is sublime and really divine in existence.

Thus our thesis is wonderfully corroborated in quite an unexpected way. The belief in the moral order of the world, as we have said, is not primarily an induction from the chaos and conflict of human experience, but a direct deduction from the idea of causality. But when this demonstrated belief is fixed firmly in the mind, it begins to gather new confirmation and a deeper meaning even from the very facts of experience that had seemed to contradict it. And those acquainted with the history of science, know that this is always one chief test of a genuine scientific discovery.

The Independence of Ethics. But it may be objected that my view destroys the independence of ethics, makes it dependent upon theology. And why should it not be thus? Are not all branches of physical science dependent upon mechanics or the laws of motion?

Note however, that morality is not thus made dependent upon any particular form of religion, nor even upon any supernatural revelation nor dogmatic outgrowth therefrom. Morality rests only upon that supreme principle which underlies every truly religious mood, that most evident and certain truth within the scope of human knowledge—the truth that the denial of an Infinite, self-sacrificing Cause logically involves the complete collapse and extinction of thought.

The Future of Morality. And if morality is still to endure it must somehow find a way of basing itself upon demonstrated truth. In more credulous times faith sufficed to keep truth alive. But the chief characteristic of modern science, the most precious gem in its crown, is its firm insistence upon the strict, full verifying of its beliefs. Thereby the physical conceptions of the Middle Ages, inaccurate and unproved, resting mainly on faith and authority, have been replaced by a vast body of exact and verified beliefs to which we give the proud name of science. But this very insistence upon exactitude and proof which has wrought such wonders by the creation of physical science has had a deadening effect upon the moral and spiritual vigor of the modern age. In the field of ethics and religion there has been the same increasing demand for definiteness and demonstration, but the demand has gone unsatisfied. For the reality of moral obligation the only proof offered has been declamatory appeals to "intuitions," "ethical postulates" or other empty phrases.

Thus the very basis of morality has been gradually undermined. A secret, almost unconscious but deadly doubt, has been gradually diffused even among the common people. For they, too, in these days, read and reflect. They, too, distrust declamation, assumptions, poetic metaphors, and are demanding proof. Hence, ethical skepticism, once confined to the erudite and the luxurious, is spreading among the poor and the oppressed. Who else

indeed have so many seemingly good grounds as they for doubting the moral order of the world?

In an age so trained in doubt and insistent upon proof as this, morality must inevitably vanish, if to the many attacks now being openly made upon it, no answers can be made but vamping and sentimental phrases. But against all such attacks my doctrine offers an impregnable defense. For example, is it claimed that moral freedom militates against the infinitude of God?¹ The answer is ready that his voluntary limitation of his own activity for the sake of others does not impair his infinitude but rather reveals it at the summit of its glory. Or do you say, with Professor James,² that the science of psychology has no way of measuring the force of resistance to temptation and hence cannot prove that it is capable, in all normal cases, of withstanding the evil impulse. I reply by referring to that scientific principle of the complexity of causal processes which has already solved for us so many riddles. Man in his struggle against evil is never alone; quite apart from the Christian revelation, or from any mystical consciousness of aid in the hour of struggle, it follows as a plain corollary from our demonstrated theorem concerning the infinite Cause that the tempted always have God on their side and so always can, if they will, draw strength from inexhaustible sources. In fine, all

¹ Hobhouse, *Morals in Evolution*, II. 129.

² *Psychology*, II.

ethical skepticism dissolves before this conception of the infinite self-sacrificing Cause.

The demonstration of the physical order of the world is universally regarded as the noblest work wrought by these four modern centuries. Who then who really loves virtue can refuse to give some attention to my demonstration of the moral order of the world?

Addendum

I have somehow omitted in the text the following quotation from Indian epic poetry given in Vivekānanda's *Karma Yoga*, p. 62. And perhaps it is better that it should stand thus alone in order to emphasize how very old and wide-spread my doctrine is. I can claim only to have given to this primitive instinct the force of demonstrated fact.

Krishna says: "Look at me, Arjuna! If I stop from work for one moment the whole universe will die. Yet I have nothing to gain from the universe. I am one Lord. I have nothing to gain from the universe, but why do I work? Because I love the world."

Contrast that with Jonathan Edwards' view of God's infinite love of *himself*. (Riley, *American Philosophy*, I. 180-4.

CHAPTER IV

PRAGMATISM AND POLITICS

I. *What is Truth?*

AMONG the many proofs of my fundamental principle here offered, one of the most convincing is that craze called Pragmatism which seems just now to be raging like an epidemic. For that principle is that inasmuch as all thinking can be proved to be essentially a relating of cause and effect, therefore the cancelling of causality involves the collapse and extinction of all thought. Now pragmatism is the climax of that obscuration of the distinction between the true and the false which has been spreading and deepening ever since Hume launched his "insoluble problem" upon a troubled world. For the pragmatist affirmation is, that the true is nothing but the useful. And to prove that affirmation true you would need to show that it is useful to believe that affirmation to be useful. And to prove that, you would need to rummage for a third utility, and then for a fourth, and so on in infinite regress. Surely such a whirligig of nonsense is near enough,

for all practical purposes, to the complete collapse and extinction of thought.

Just now we are being deluged with this endless talk about "values." Royce tells us about their "appreciation"; Höffding about their "conservation," and the brightest genius of them all, poor Nietzsche, about their "transvaluation." But what is the *true* standard of all these values? Is it merely the "cash value" of which James speaks so often in his recent defense of pragmatism? Surely, here is one question of the true or false which is logically prior to all discussion of values.

But it is idle to argue against what is merely a symptom of a growing disease. It is far more important to understand the pathological conditions of which the symptom is but a passing effect. For there is really nothing novel in pragmatism. Its phraseology is different from that used by Kant; but behind these differences as another has said: "There is an essential identity of thought, an identity which a comparison of the details of the two doctrines makes apparent."¹ What could be a more pragmatic denial of all distinction between the true and the false than Kant's central dogma of phenomenality—that strange a-priori compulsion to believe the categories true and at the same time to believe them to be false? Or than Hegel's identifying of contradictories? Or Bradley's "degrees of reality"? What are all these and other dogmas of like import but so many signs of a mighty under-

¹ Raub, *Pragmatism and Kantianism*. In *Studies, Phil.*, 212.

tow that for more than a century now has been sweeping us out upon a fatal sea where all is darkness, where reason is wrecked and truth sinks out of sight?

But pragmatism, being bolder, more out-spoken, less cumbered with ambiguous technicalities than the older systems, reveals more clearly the real source of this evil tendency in modern thought. For manifestly its strength lies not in any force in its own argument—heaven save the mark!—but in the weakness of its opponents. For the latter when taunted as they constantly are by the pragmatists with Pilate's old question: "What is truth"? have absolutely nothing to offer. The old view of a true thought as being a correct image or copy or picture of reality is hopelessly obsolete. And nothing better appears in its place, except possibly the Neo-Hegelian doctrine of coherence, or the articulated whole and its parts. But that, as I shall show later on, is almost equally futile and misleading. And so in default of any sound answer, the pragmatist triumphantly preaches that truth is nothing but utility. One almost despairs of human progress when he contrasts this modern answer with the one that Jesus gave nineteen centuries ago: "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth."

Nor from our present point of view does it seem difficult to definitely determine what truth is. Abandon the crude fallacy of resemblance; a true idea is certainly not "like" the object ideated. Sub-

stitute for that relation a causal one. All will probably concede that objects of some sort are presented to us, and that these presentations are more or less infected with falseness or illusion; furthermore all history teaches that man's whole inquiry after truth has consisted in a long search for the *causes* producing this false, illusory element. Where the causes are known the illusions no longer trouble us; as we see, for example, in the case of the rising and setting of the sun. Putting these facts together I conclude that the essence of truth consists in *the affirming of such causal connection as actually exists between objects.*

(1) *A Universal Concession.* Do you say that I ought to go on and give in detail the evidence for my theory of truth? But fortunately there is no need of this prolixity. For both the rival schools of thought, the empiricist and the idealist alike have always maintained what forms the essence of my theory, although without understanding the full force of their concession. Despite their endless disputes and preposterous paradoxes, both schools have agreed in regarding some kind of necessary or unvariable connection between objects as the one fundamental and absolutely indubitable element in all human knowledge. Both, indeed, have been so dominated by Hume that they have given this connection some other name than causation; the empiricist calls it mechanism, the idealist calls it coherence, "articulation" or something of that sort. But that concerns us not at all, since we have proved

that all these other relations have each a causal relation involved within them. The vital point is that both schools make this connection the one essential and indispensable element in knowledge. The idealists especially have ever insisted with eager, even tiresome emphasis, that their doctrine made no difference in regard to the connection of phenomena. Hence I will waste no time in proving what nobody denies.

(2) *Truth as Coherence.* But concerning the Neo-Hegelian theory of truth as coherence a word must be said upon which I entreat the reader to ponder. Divested of the metaphorical, mystifying terms in which it is couched, this theory of "the articulated Whole and its parts" is not very far removed from my view of truth as causal connection; but it is vitiated by two great over-sights which have led straightway to the utter failure of all Hegelian attempts to interpret rationally either morals, modern science or human history.

Even the Hegelians themselves begin to realize the fact of this failure and to some extent its cause. They see the folly of pretending to any such knowledge of the systematic Whole as that from which the knowledge of the parts is supposed to be derivative. Or as their most recent exponent, Joachim, puts it: "Nothing short of the one all-inclusive significant whole—ideal or absolute experience—can be completely coherent in this sense of the term."¹ And on the next page he comes to

¹ Joachim, *The Nature of Truth*, 170.

this conclusion: "The coherence-notion of truth may thus be said to suffer shipwreck at the very entrance of the harbor * * * the voyage ends in disaster and a disaster which is inevitable. For unless our whole discussion is fundamentally mistaken the coherence notion of necessity involves the recognition that certain demands both *must be* and *cannot be* completely satisfied."

(1) The first of these over-sights has already been pointed out by Stout¹; the coherence theory fails to account for what is most essential in immediate or perceptual knowledge. "The test of truth which is really operative in the development of knowledge includes an appeal to immediacy as well as to coherence."

But without dwelling upon what is almost a truism, note now that my theory of truth avoids that rock. For, the recognition of causal connection is just as much the essence of immediate as of any other kind of knowledge. On the one hand in every perception we behold a wonderfully complex process of causation of which the object perceived is the chief, the most constant, the determining factor; on the other hand the perception or mental state as the result or product of that process. And inasmuch as all thinking is a relating of cause and effect, therefore we cannot know the causal process save through its product and conversely the product only through the process.

The illusionists imagine that they gain new sup-

¹ *Mind*, Jan., 1908.

port for their theory in the recent scientific discoveries concerning the character of the elements. But it is not so. Whether the elements may be atoms or electrons or something still more subtle, the new knowledge we are gaining of them is simply a deeper insight into what they are *doing*—their swift transmutations, their wonderful dealings with “a store of energy so great that every breath we draw has within it sufficient power to drive the workshop of the world.”¹ That is an ineffable gain to knowledge. But merely to picture the elements, not as atoms but as “the manifestation of units of negative electricity lying embosomed in an omnipresent ether”² is at best but an aid to the imagination. To think otherwise is to sink back into the old Kantian error of rejecting the knowledge of causation as an illusion and substituting for it idle dreams sprung from the fallacy of resemblance. Once again I urge, then, that truth consists in knowing not what things look like, but what they are doing.

(2) But there is a second and still more ruinous oversight in this Hegelian theory of the systematic whole and its parts. It consists in forgetting that since our knowledge of the Whole must necessarily be very finite and defective, therefore *it can be used only negatively and not positively*. Let me explain.

I may know, for example, very little about the inner constitution of the human body and yet be fully aware that a very small bit of poison will

¹ Duncan, *The New Knowledge*, 256 and 172. ² *Ibid*, 252.

destroy it. Or again, to destroy a bridge it is not necessary to take it all apart; a few stones removed here and there, and it all tumbles into ruin. Or, a slight crack in the walls is often enough to show that the whole building is about to collapse. And in the way thus illustrated I have dealt with the conception of that infinite whole which no sane mind pretends to comprehend in all its fullness. By multiplied proofs drawn from all the varied forms of thinking I have shown that the negation of an infinite self-sacrificing Cause involves the negation of all true causality and that that means the complete collapse and extinction of thought. This then is what I mean by the negative treatment of thought—the simple showing of what is necessarily involved in the negation of some fundamental principle.

It seems strange enough that the Hegelians, so vociferous in their praises of “negativity,” should not have seen what might be accomplished through this modest method of real negative reasoning. Instead of that they imagined that from their metaphor of the organic whole they could *positively* deduce and reconstruct the universe. So wild an ambition must end, just as Joachim says it does end, in shipwreck and irretrievable disaster.

Summary. But this negative method just described must not be considered as a single thin thread of argument upon which very weighty consequences are supported. On the contrary the argument is wide and strong. For human thought may be contemplated from many points of view: it is,

as it were, a vast building with many sides and angles. And whatever side we approach we find it so dominated by the principle of causality that the negation of that principle involves instant collapse and ruin. Thus we first considered thought as the instituting of relations between things; and we found that these relations were incoherent, often self-contradictory, until they were so developed as to assume the form of causal relations. Then we considered thought as predication or judgment; and we found that this union of the one substance or subject and its many attributes had never been rationally explained by logicians and was indeed inexplicable, until we had proved it to be a causal unity. Then we considered thinking as an abstracting process; and then we found that each of those abstractions which Bradley and his confrères had reviled as "wandering adjectives," as "mutilated, dissected" and subjected to all manner of indignities, was in reality a splendid vision of the breadth, the depth and the height of that causal connection which binds the universe together. Then we turned to the universal, a thought so baffling that now-a-days its very existence is generally denied; but it revealed itself to us not only as a true thought but as more exalted than all others, since it alone speaks of causal processes as absolutely *invariable*. Surely St. Thomas was right when, seven centuries ago, he declared universals to be God's thoughts and his very essence.

Is not this a wonderfully cumulative argument?

From whatever side or angle we approach the structure of truth we find that the cancelling of causality tumbles everything into unintelligible ruins. Who then will venture to dispute my claim that all truth is essentially the affirming of causal connection?

II. *Decay of Truthfulness*

But my doctrine has behind it the authority of no school or party. The great body of philosophic teachers and thinkers are driven to confess that for them the nature of truth transcends all power of definition and understanding. Even the idealists, generally so self-confident, begin to see that their coherence theory has suffered shipwreck. In other words, the final outcome of the philosophic movement since the days of Kant is the now triumphant pragmatism. All other theories have failed. The followers of Hegel and Spencer, bitterly antagonistic in most other respects, agree in teaching the essential self-contradictoriness of truth; or, as Mr. Mallock puts it, every fact, when thoroughly probed, proves to be but "an example of that insoluble contradiction which underlies our conception of everything." In an age thus saturated with agnostic and pragmatic views there is evidently not very much to encourage the love of truth. And unhappily with us there have been two special tendencies that have mightily discouraged it.

One of these tendencies is shown at its worst in the later history of India. There the universal

belief in Maya or illusion has spread a veil of deceit over everything; and there truthfulness is an almost forgotten virtue. "To this day" says Lord Elphinstone, "unveracity remains the universal and incurable plague-spot in the moral life of India."¹ In Hindu households veracity is said to be scarcely recognized as a virtue, and in the Anglo-Indian courts of justice native testimony is generally regarded as almost worthless.² And so Lord Curzon, not long ago Viceroy of India, declared that "the dominant note of Asian individuality is in character a general indifference to truth and respect for successful wile."³

At Rome quite another cause—mercenariness—extirpated the old Roman love of truth. Even the Stoics scouted at logic "as a false guide leading only to pernicious subtleties."⁴ "The noblest minds were without any desire of knowledge for its own sake or any hope of attaining it."⁵ "Religion," says Froude, "once the foundation of the laws and rule of personal conduct, had subsided into opinion. The educated in their hearts disbelieved it. Temples were still built with increasing splendor, the established forms were scrupulously observed. Public men spoke conventionally of Providence that they might throw upon their opponents the odium of impiety; but of genuine belief that life had any seri-

¹ *Hist. India*, I. 378; also Macleod and other authorities.

² Maine *Village Communities*, 225.

³ Curzon, *The Far East*, 4.

⁴ Ritter, *Hist. An. Phil.* IV. 179.

⁵ Dill, *Roman Society*, 396.

ous meaning there was none remaining beyond the circle of the silent, patient ignorant multitude."

Now by a strange fatality which is explained in my larger work, our modernism has combined both of these impulses so hostile to the truth-loving spirit. The philosophic or Indian one is embodied in the reign of the Kantian illusionism; the practical Roman one in a universal cupidity inflamed almost to madness. Is it any wonder that under the sway of two such tremendous forces the love of truth for its own sake has vanished? That the very air is fetid with fraud and chicanery? Considering the present ethical conditions, one has no right to censure the pragmatists; they ought rather to be praised for not having denied that truth was at least useful.

The Conflict of Science and Religion. A good deal of nonsense has been uttered concerning an alleged warfare between religion and science; they are even supposed to contradict each other. But the differences between them are not fundamental, and when the spirit of dogmatism is exorcised, they can be readily adjusted. The only real conflict is between that scientific habit of thought—distrust of the unverified—and certain illogical tendencies which religious teachers now seem more bent upon fostering than ever before. The latter are now fatuously resting religion upon a faith so blind, so unsupported that it would have been rejected scornfully even in the Middle Ages.¹ Theologians are

¹ Armstrong, *Transitional Eras*, 283.

even hailing pragmatism with delight as the true bulwark of religion.¹ But if it has no better support than that, religion is doomed to die.

But religion is eternal. It is the primal instinct out of which all other knowledge—physical and ethical—has been evolved. Even modern science, as I have shown in my *Philosophy of History*, had its birth in that ineradicable conviction of the Middle Ages that there was One, infinite, self-sacrificing Cause of all. And if no one can find a fatal flaw in my argument then that conviction becomes the most certain, the most completely verified principle within the scope of human thought. And the “warfare” between science and religion is ended.

III. *Politics*

I touch upon this theme merely to justify the hint given in the heading of this chapter, that there is a close kinship between pragmatism and modern politics. Our political life is the incarnation of the pragmatic principle that truth is truth only when it is useful. In other words, it is the masquerade of deceit, venality, fraud, bribery and thieving under the fair form of democracy. Civil government in America has been perverted into an instrument for promoting industrial schemes—trusts, monopolies, etc.—which increase the burdens, steal the bread and embitter the life of the common people.

Even those most friendly to the existing order of

¹ Lyman, *Studies in Phil.*

things, if they have any spirit of fairness, are forced to concede this perversion of democracy. Thus Dr. Shaw says:¹ "If government in America had more carefully regulated the conditions of economic life, in order to maintain equality of opportunity, it would have been scarcely possible for these disturbances to have arisen which are due partly to the over-development of particular corporations, and partly to the undue extent of the personal fortunes and corporate control of particular individuals. * * * I have tried to prove that a more statesman-like policy as respects the sources of natural wealth in our public domain would have inured to the benefit of the national treasury and prevented some of those harmful inequalities of fortune due to the acquirement by private interests of the iron ore deposits, the petroleum fields, the coal belts, the timber areas and certain other factors of national enrichment, which only recently were the property of all the people, but which, through a slack and negligent public policy, have now become monopolized in the hands of a few, and are the sources of colossal private fortunes. In like manner it is easy enough now to see that lines of public policy—wholly equitable and in accord with our general principles of equality and freedom—would have prevented the development of the larger trusts and combinations, at least in the forms they have now assumed, with stupendous individual fortunes as the key to their economic methods."

¹ Shaw. *Political Problems of American Development*, 184-5.

Shaw, indeed, would apologize for these transactions as merely "neglects and mistakes." But hosts of ordinary people have been hustled off to prison for similar "neglects and mistakes," on a far narrower scale.

The Winning of the West. Under this title our President has written a historical romance highly esteemed by some. But no history has yet been written recounting the way in which, during the last forty years, the West has been really won by the speculators and gamblers of the East.

Such a work would tell the story of the railroads with their enormous capitalization largely fictitious; of the Lake Superior iron-ore lands, valued at a thousand millions of dollars,¹ a little while ago belonging to the public domain, now surreptitiously passed into private hands; of the lumber, oil and iron trusts, the tariff and the whole brood of minor iniquities by which the West has been *won*. Neither Alexander the Great nor any other conqueror ever made so golden a conquest and by such base methods. The annual tribute extorted by the East from the West—after deducting a fair return for capital really expended—is twenty times greater than that which Imperial Rome extorted from the whole civilized world.

But the West is the garden of the world; if it had not been, it would already have become a desert through this draining away of its resources. And its people are the élite of all nations; for, of our

¹ *Ibid*, 113.

emigration the weaker element stops on the Atlantic coast, the better pushes on and out to the land of hope and opportunity. Only there are alien races really assimilated by the magic touch of simple rural life, communion with Nature in her kindest moods and the freedom of the boundless prairies. And this people, in all the quiet, genial strength of their solidarity, have resolved to throw off the yoke. Four years ago the political campaign was decided partly by a fancy for "Rough Riders," but mainly by the disgust and disheartening of the great majority of the opposition who saw their chosen leader sacrificed to the greed and malignity of the money power. And this year they are waiting to see whether that betrayal is to be repeated, or whether, with the man of their choice as standard-bearer, they are to march on to victory. Once already the West, with her Lincoln, Grant and their comrades, has saved the Republic which—if defended only by the egoism and pretenses of the East—would have gone to pieces in ninety days. If left free, she may save it again; or, at least, ward off impending anarchy for many years.

Conclusion

But the purest politics, the wisest economic and administrative schemes can give only temporary relief. They cannot cure the fatal disease raging in all the veins of our modernism. Where there is no vision of God and righteousness the people must

perish. And the whole drift of modern philosophy for the last hundred years has been to reject that vision as a mirage.

(1) But against my conclusion the hackneyed argument may be urged that religion and morals are in no worse plight than the physical sciences: they, too, must begin with postulates or assumptions. I answer that physical science has but one real postulate—the absolute invariability of the sequences between the motions of things—and that postulate has been verified untold thousands of times with such minute, mathematical exactitude that only a madman could doubt its truth. But manifestly religion and moral laws cannot be thus verified by means of the Differential Calculus.

(2) Or it may be urged that a great many people still pay some respect to religion and morals. But that is as absurd as to argue that because a river maintains its smooth and even course, therefore it cannot be about to plunge into an abyss although the abyss is in plain sight.

I ask, then, the philosophic teachers and thinkers of America: Why imitate Nero? Why continue to fiddle over the old discords and obscure subtleties while Rome is burning? Answer my argument. Show, if possible, some fatal flaw in it. Test it, as in a ship-wreck you would test a life-line, even though the man offering it should be unknown to fame and the line should not be fabricated after the fantastic methods of German philosophy.

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